Sheryl P. Walter Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 20 Mar 2014

Message Text

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PAGE 01 STATE 088603
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C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 088603

EXDIS MIL ADDEE HANDLE AS SPECAT EXCLUSIVE

FOLLOWING REPEAT ATHENS 2701 ACTION SECSATAE INFO ANKARA
NICOSIA USNATO DATED APR 03:

QTE: C O N F I D E N T I A L ATHENS 2701

EXDIS

FOR THE DEPUTY SECRETARY FROM THE AMBASSADOR

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PEPR, TU, GR, CY, US
SUBJECT: GOG FOLLOW-UP ON BRIEFING ON EASTERN MEDITERRANEAN
POLICY DECISIONS.

REF: ATHENS 2686

1. ACTING FOREIGN MINISTER AVEROFF CALLED ME TO HIS
HOME SUNDAY NIGHT TO INQUIRE WHAT WE ANTICIPATED FROM
ANKARA WITH RESPECT TO CYPRUS. (MFA DIRECTOR GENERAL
FOR POLITICAL AFFAIRS TZOUNIS HAD CALLED IN THE POLITICAL
COUNSELOR ON APRIL 1 TO MAKE THE SAME POINT - SEPTEL.)
CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 02 STATE 088603

2. POINTING OUT THAT HE WAS ACTING ON INSTRUCTIONS
FROM PRIME MINISTER CARAMANLIS, WHO HE DESCRIBED AS
"TROUBLED," AVEROFF CALLED MY ATTENTION TO A STATEMENT
ISSUED EARLIER IN THE EVENING BY PASOK LEADER
PAPANDREOU (TEXT BELOW) AND THE REMARK OF A COLLEAGUE
WHO SAID THAT THE ISSUE WOULD INCREASE PAPANDREOU'S

Sheryl P. Walter Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 20 Mar 2014

Sheryl P. Walter Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 20 Mar 2014

SUPPORT FROM THE 25 PERCENT HE RECEIVED IN THE NOVEMBER 1977 ELECTION TO 35 PERCENT. AVEROFF ADDED THAT WHEN HE WAS INFORMED OF PAPANDREOU'S STATEMENT HE ISSUED HIS OWN ON BEHALF OF THE GOVERNMENT, STRESSING THAT HE SOUGHT TO KEEP THE GOVERNMENT'S REACTION MODERATE. AVEROFF'S STATEMENT WAS AS FOLLOWS: "I DO NOT BELIEVE THAT IT IS RIGHT AND FAIR TO PROPOSE TO LIFT THE EMBARGO BEFORE THE TURKISH SIDE SUBMITS ITS PROPOSALS ON THE CYPRUS ISSUE WHICH TURKEY SAID WOULD BE 'REASONABLE'".

3. AVEROFF WENT ON TO SAY THAT HE EXPECTED COMMENTS SIMILAR TO PAPANDREOU'S TO COME FROM FORMER LEADER OF THE UNION OF THE DEMOCRATIC CENTER (UDC) GEORGE MAVROS, WHICH WILL COMBINE TO MAKE ANY MODERATING INFLUENCE BY THE GOG ALL THE MORE DIFFICULT TO SUSTAIN. IT WAS IMPORTANT THEREFORE FOR THE GOVERNMENT TO KNOW AS SOON AS POSSIBLE WHETHER AND WHEN ANKARA WILL BE FORWARDING ITS PROMISED PROPOSALS.

4. I SAID ONLY THAT THE USG CONTINUED TO EXPECT TURKEY TO PUT FORWARD PROPOSALS. I WAS UNABLE, HOWEVER, I SAID, TO DESCRIBE WHAT EXPECTATIONS WE HAVE AS A RESULT OF THE DEPUTY SECRETARY'S CONVERSATIONS IN ANKARA BUT THAT I WOULD ENDEAVOR TO FIND OUT.

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5. THE TEXT OF PAPANDREOU'S STATEMENT IS AS FOLLOWS

"1. WE ARE NOT SURPRISED BY THIS NEWS. WE NEVER HAVE HAD ANY ILLUSIONS ON THE POLICY FOLLOWED BY THE U.S. GOVERNMENT.

"2. WHAT IS WORTH MENTIONING IS THE CYNICISM OF A GOVERNMENT THAT PRETENDS TO BE INTERESTED IN HUMAN RIGHTS. THE CARTER GOVERNMENT DOES NOT HESITATE TO ARM A COUNTRY WHICH, IN 1974, IN COOPERATION WITH THE NIXON GOVERNMENT, LAUNCHED A BRUTAL ATTACK AGAINST A SMALL AND INDEPENDENT COUNTRY, OCCUPIED A PART OF ITS TERRITORY, AND CREATED 200,000 GREEK CYPRIOT REFUGEES.

"3. THE LIFTING OF THE EMBARGO AT THIS VERY MOMENT CONSTITUTES A FURTHER ENCOURAGEMENT TO TURKEY'S ILLEGAL CLAIMS IN THE AEGEAN AND CREATES A DIRECT THREAT TO GREECE'S TERRITORIAL INTEGRITY. IT ALSO CONFIRMS WHAT WE HAVE BEEN INSISTENTLY REPEATING ALL THIS TIME, THAT GREECE SHOULD IMMEDIATELY CLOSE ALL AMERICAN BASES OPERATING ON GREEK SOIL AND PUT AN END TO ALL TALKS ABOUT ITS RETURN TO THE MILITARY WING OF NATO."

Sheryl P. Walter Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 20 Mar 2014

Sheryl P. Walter Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 20 Mar 2014

6. (BACKGROUND: THE PAPANDREOU STATEMENT, WHICH LED TO AVEROFF'S, RESULTED FROM A QUESTION BY THE NEW YORK TIMES CORRESPONDENT HERE, NICHOLAS GAGE, WHO WAS ASKED BY THE TIMES TO OBTAIN GREEK REACTIONS TO ITS APRIL 2 STORY CONCERNING THE LIFTING OF THE EMBARGO. GAGE TOLD US THAT AFTER OBTAINING PAPANDREOU'S STATEMENT HE ALSO GOT STATEMENTS FROM AVEROFF (AS ACTING FOREIGN MINISTER) AND MAVROS (HE SAID HE WAS UNABLE TO REACH CURRENT UDC LEADER ZIGDIS). GAGE SAID HE ALSO TALKED TO PRESIDENT KYPRIANOU AND FILED A STATEMENT FROM HIM AS WELL.)

7. COMMENT: THE GOG CLEARLY EXPECTS THAT THE ANNOUNCE-
CONFIDENTIAL

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PAGE 04 STATE 088603

MENT CONCERNING THE LIFTING OF THE EMBARGO WILL UNDERMINE ITS DOMESTIC POSITION AND PRO-WESTERN POLICY. PAPANDREOU HAS ALREADY BEGUN TO EXPLOIT THE ISSUE AND WE CAN EXPECT MORE FROM HIM AS WELL AS FROM OTHER OPPOSITION LEADERS. THE GOG OBVIOUSLY SEES THE EARLY PRESENTATION TO WALDHEIM (I.E., WITHOUT DELAY AFTER THE EMBARGO ANNOUNCEMENT) OF "REASONABLE" TURKISH PROPOSALS ON CYPRUS AS A POSSIBLE WAY OF CONTAINING THE REACTION HERE. IT IS OUR JUDGMENT AS WELL, THAT PROMPT SUBMISSION OF THE TURKISH SIDE'S PROPOSALS ON CYPRUS WHICH PROVIDE THE BASIS FOR THE RESUMPTION OF THE INTERCOMMUNAL TALKS WOULD HELP TO ALLEVIATE THE SITUATION.

8. ACTION REQUESTS: WE WOULD APPRECIATE GUIDANCE AS QUICKLY AS POSSIBLE ON WHAT MORE WE CAN TELL THE GOG ABOUT THE CYPRUS PROPOSALS. THE DEPARTMENT'S PROMPT RESPONSE TO THE QUESTIONS PUT TO US BY AVEROFF ON FRIDAY (REGARDING SOME KIND OF SECURITY REASSURANCE, A CLARIFICATION OF WHAT ADDITIONAL MILITARY SUPPLIES MIGHT BECOME AVAILABLE TO TURKEY, AND THE TERMS OF THE SSA LOAN) WOULD ALSO BE APPRECIATED.
MCCLOSKEY
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Sheryl P. Walter Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 20 Mar 2014

Sheryl P. Walter Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 20 Mar 2014

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20 Mar 2014
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